



July 19, 2006

Dear Congressman Blumenauer,

This year, the United States Congress has a rare chance to protect treasured wild lands, wildlife, and scenic rivers on Mount Hood and in the Columbia Gorge. The Mount Hood Stewardship Legacy Act (HR 5025), which you introduced along with Representatives Walden, Hooley and DeFazio, presents a golden opportunity to designate the first new wilderness on Mount Hood in 21 years, along with 23 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers.

The Campaign for America's Wilderness strongly supports your efforts and this bill. The Campaign for America's Wilderness is a national wilderness advocacy organization that works with local and state partner organizations across the country to help conserve Americans' wilderness birthright.

Wilderness areas like those around Mount Hood protect our forests from clear cuts and reckless development, safeguard clean drinking water, preserve habitat for wildlife, and ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy natural areas just as we do today.

The Mount Hood Stewardship Legacy Act will preserve special wild places like the rugged backcountry of Oregon's Roaring River, 1000-year-old cedar trees in Big Bottom, and old-growth and drinking watersheds of Eagle Creek. This is also important habitat for elk, deer, salmon, birds, and other wildlife that call Mount Hood home.

The scenic beauty of Mount Hood and the Columbia River Gorge draws tens of thousands of visitors to Oregon each year and, as is the case with wilderness areas across the country, brings millions of dollars into the economy. Wild lands are what make Oregon such a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

I congratulate you on your commitment and your foresight on behalf of Oregonians and all Americans who enjoy our treasured wild lands, and I thank you for your support for wilderness.

Sincerely,

Mike Matz  
Executive Director